Sale of Sugar.

70. ✱ **MR. E. K. MADHAVAN** (*Kunnatnad* cum *Parur*) : Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether they have received petitions regarding irregularities of the sale of sugar in the Parur Municipal area ; and

(*b*) if so, what they have done in the matter ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The matter is being enquired into.

MR. E. K. MADHAVAN : May I know the number of petitions received in the matter ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN . One.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: May I know whether Government are aware that the whole supply of sugar is received once a week and that there is irregularity in the distribution of it ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : There is no information that there are irregularities in sugar distribution. It is left entirely to the local officer. If there is any defect in it, the Tahsildar may be approached.

Arrack shops in the State.

71. ✱**MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI** (*Neyyattinkara* cum *Trivandrum*) Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether the number of arrack shops in the State is larger in 1118 than in 1117 ;

(*b*) if so, the reason for increasing the number ;

(*c*) whether licences are issued for opening temporary toddy and arrack shops at Pampa and Sabarimala ; and

(*d*) what were the periods for which such licences are issued ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : (*a*) No.

(*b*) This does not arise.

(*c*) Temporary licences for sale of arrack near Pampa are issued.

(*d*) For 8 days in 1119.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI : May I know with reference to answers to part (c) and (d), why such temporary licences are granted ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : It is considered necessary to avoid pilgrims and others taking illicit stuff to that place and drinking it there.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI : May I know whether adequate steps cannot be taken to prevent the pilgrims from taking illicit arrack to those places ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : To conduct such an investigation would be troubling the pilgrims. If the supply is controlled, there will be no difficulty for checking. Further, the transport of liquor is limited to a fixed quantity. If the quantity to be transported comes to more than a bottle a transport permit has to be secured.

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MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I kuow, what is the practical difficulty in preventing illicit arrack being taken?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: It is not possible to examine the bundles of all the pilgrims, nor will it be good form.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know why it is not possible to make the necessary search?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: Sir, I am speaking from personal experience, that the number of pilgrims that go to Sabarimala is very large and that is another difficulty. The honourable member perhaps has not gone there.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Sir, that is an unwarranted assumption and I protest against it.

PRESIDENT: After all, the Excise Commissioner has only stated that the honourable member has not gone to Sabarimala. There is nothing wrong in it.

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: Sir, it is up to the honourable member to say if he has gone there.

PRESIDENT: I suppose that honourable members know that today whisky is being brought into the State in turbans, in articles of clothing tied up in girdles and the department has been able to discover all these things. It is well known that a large amount of liquor in small bottles were very soon after the war found in the dress of eminent ladies travelling from France to England. The names of these ladies were given in the English papers, daily editions, on the declaration of the war.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know whether any attempt has been made in previous years to make searches as to whether illicit arrack is being taken by the pilgrims?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: It is being made even now and there is a special party working for that who have found many cases of illicit ganja being transported. To avoid all these, temporary licences for sale of arrack are issued, just for catering to the needs of the pilgrims or others. Their numbers are yearly increasing in tens of thousands. In the matter of licence, it is issued for certain centres. If any difficulty is felt in securing licit stuff illicit transport will be the result.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know, what was the result of such searches in previous years?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: Some ganja cases were taken as a consequence.

MR. K. A. MATHEW (*Thiruvalla*): May I know whether it is not the primary function of the Excise Department to check the illicit transport of liquor?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN: Yes, Sir. We know how to do it. If the honourable member will please look into the Administration Report of the Excise Department, he will readily see how it has been possible now-a-days for the department to effectively stop such illicit practices better than in previous years.

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MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Tiruvalla*): May I know the approximate number of pilgrims who have gone last year to Sabarimala for Makaravilakku ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : Sir, the total amount of temple collection from pilgrims was stated to be about Rs. 40,000 and each pilgrim is supposed to pay only one or 2 chuckrms. A calculation can be made from this. The number of pilgrims may be a few lakhs.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI : Under these circumstances, may I ask whether it is practicable to search each and every pilgrim who goes there for Makaravilakku ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : Sir, it is not possible and I may humbly submit that is not desirable also, because of the occasion.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI : May I know whether there are not particular routes to go there ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : I am aware of two, but there may be more.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI : May I know whether it is not possible for the excise authorities to set apart their preventive force to particular routes through which alone it may be possible for intending pilgrims to take illicit arrack ?

PRESIDENT : Does the honourable member suggest by this that each and every pilgrim should be searched ? I understand that the persons who go on pilgrimage to Sabarimala number between 3 and 4 lakhs. When there is such a huge number, is it possible to suggest that their clothing, baggage, bundles etc., should be examined by the Excise authorities, and supposing that were done, will it not be regarded as an unconscionable infliction on the people ?

MR. S. MUTHUKARUPPA PILLAI : Is it possible to suspend the issue to the shops at Pampa and Sabarimala ?

MR. P. G. NARAYANAN UNNITHAN : Nothing is issued at Sabarimala. It is stopped. At Pampa, for the reasons which I have already explained to the House, it is not possible to stop the practice of issuing temporary licences.

Constitution of a separate Chengannur taluk.

72. ***MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI :** Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether they have considered the question of constituting a separate Chengannur taluk consisting of those pakuthies of the old Chengannur taluk;

(*b*) if the answer to part (a) is in the affirmative, the steps taken on the matter ; and

(*c*) whether representations have been received for the constitution of a separate Chengannur taluk?

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